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For Dwight's Journal of Music.

## Musical Jottings.

A friend permits me to copy from a book of occasional jottings, never, I am assured, in any "manner, shape or form" intended for publication, the following paragraphs, which may not be without some interest and suggestiveness.

SCHUMANN represents a period of transition. He is the last link between pure classical forms and modern extravagance, the last narrow bridge that still maintains itself,—often not without a visible, painful strain and perilous vacillation,—upon the heights of Art. After him there is the deluge and chaos come again,—we plunge straightway into dark abysses, whose depth no one perhaps has yet fully fathomed, and from whose tangled confusion it will not be easy to find a path out again to the clear light of day.

WAGNER repeats himself *ad nauseam*. Hear one of his marches, and you have heard them all. This cannot well be otherwise with one who does nothing but turn around and around again in barren forms that are not quickened or animated by a single thought,—if that indeed may be called form, which is rather a constant violation and distortion of all law and form.—Of course his followers would raise their hands and eyes to heaven in pious horror at this assertion. But nevertheless it is true, must be true, since it is impossible he should know anything but form. For heaven has never blessed him with one musical idea in his life. What ideas he has, cannot be legitimately expressed in music, which is equivalent to saying they cannot be expressed in it at all, and consequently always remain there as so much dead matter.

I understand now what is meant by the words: "BEETHOVEN has pushed forward to the last confines of his art." He presents to us indeed, the almost unparalleled spectacle of a mind so continuous, and I might say, so infinite in its progress and development,—this almost more than anything he has actually done, except as his works give evidences of that development, is what makes him so incomparably and imperishably great,—that he seems to have traversed his field from end to end, mounted to the very top of the ladder without skipping a round. For what note is there so tender or so delicate that he has not sometime sounded, what chord so powerful or majestic that he has not somewhere struck it! He has exhausted his sphere, and arrived at its limits, come to a halt, touched the inexorable point and barrier there is somewhere in all art, which it is impossible to overleap, if indeed the 9th Symphony is not already a straining beyond the legitimate lines.—And all this not in outward form

alone, but in the innermost essence of the art. It often seems that there is but one imperceptibly small step more that must be taken the very next instant, a veil so thin that it must be rent, a fetter so slight that it must drop off, between his harmonies and speech. A breath more, it appears, and the word would burst triumphant from these strains.—(I wrote this without remembering that Marx, that most sympathetic of Beethoven's biographers, has said almost the same thing,—"these beings of wood and metal, he had *'made them in his own image,'* manlike, endowed with intelligence, so that one often expects: now, now the lips must uncloset to utter the word, the human word.") And yet just here resounds with crushing force the awful fiat, Thus far shalt thou go and no further! There is something intensely painful in these fetters that seem to clog music more than the other arts,—in its vagueness, its dumbness, its incapability of expressing anything definite, and in view of it I can almost forgive modern musicians their insane ravings, and frantic efforts to make their art convey to us positive ideas, although their antics are as grotesque and hideous as the contortions and incoherent stammerings of poor mute Quasimodo in his wild attempts to pronounce a distinct word. I understand that when they grow conscious of it, this conviction of the eternal dumbness to which they are condemned, must fill the minds of musicians with something like despair, must so have filled Beethoven's.—I have read of him that he called poets happy in having a wider field of action, and occasionally fancy that his was really a poet's soul. (In the more exclusive meaning of the term,) chained down, "gebannt," into a musician's body,—if I may call that body by which I mean rather something spiritual,—that he was in fact too conscious, too broad and clear a mind, too profound a thinker, to find perfect contentment in his art. It seems to me I see the dim consciousness of this, the beginning of the struggle with powers outside of and more powerful than himself, in the 9th Symphony. It was his last great work; after it he could have said nothing more, and he died none too early. Marx too says, "There he stood now at the confines of his symphonic empire. *It must have been the last Symphony!*" This element of discontent, these symptoms of inner dissolution, if I may so express it, make that symphony to me sadder than any dirge. Here the great king in the realms of tone has once more marshalled all his most powerful hosts; has he not filled it with his noblest thought, his fairest fancy, his sweetest and most heavenly strains? In the Scherzo and Adagio, and even passages in the first movement, he "sings the deepest songs, attunes the fullest chord,"—and still all this does not content him, still there bursts from his struggling soul, his overburdened heart, the sob, the groan, the cry:—"O Freunde, nicht diese Töne!"

## The New Symphony by Brahms.

[From the London Times.]

The Crystal Palace concert on Saturday afternoon (the 81st) was interesting in more than one respect. It was especially interesting on account of a performance, creditable alike to Mr. Manns and his orchestra, of the "Cambridge Symphony," by Herr Johannes Brahms. This symphony, though not, as has been stated, composed in consideration of the honor proffered to the author on the part of the Cambridge University, was performed on the occasion of the degree of Musical Doctor being conferred upon his friend and worthy fellow-musician, Joseph Joachim, who showed himself sensible of the distinction, and whose actual presence, as conductor and performer, gave *éclat* to the ceremonial. Indeed, but for the symphony in C minor being made the feature of the evening concert at the Guildhall, nobody would have bestowed a thought upon Herr Brahms. That, considering the few rehearsals Herr Joachim was able to obtain, the new work was well played and received with more or less warmth, our readers have been made aware. Mr. Manns was enabled to command more frequent and serious preparation; and, with the exceptional means as his command, it is not surprising that the performance at the Crystal Palace (unlike that of Herr Joachim's *Elegiac Overture*) should, in detail at least, have surpassed its predecessor. Closer familiarity with the symphony in no way tends to alter, or indeed to modify, our early impressions of its worth. It is assuredly a noble production, in which the dignity of art is upheld from first to last, while the hand of a practised master is everywhere apparent. That Herr Brahms is a highly-cultivated musician, the most highly cultivated, perhaps, in an abstract sense, his favored country can just now boast, all must admit. But whether he is absolutely a musician of genius, even after this last and most ambitious specimen of his art-work (the "German Requiem" excepted), is not so easy to decide. In the C minor symphony we recognize every quality belonging to profound scholarship; all the earnestness that reveals lofty purpose and a disdain for mere "effect;" glimpses of melody, here and there, too genuine not to be accounted beautiful; much fancy; expression not infrequently as deep as it is apparently spontaneous; a wonderful richness in the combination of instruments, with a view to the production of color and contrast; a command of orchestral resources, in short, such as only a few musicians have been able to acquire, together with other desirable qualifications towards the realization of that which should be perfect art. At the same time, Herr Brahms, to judge him by the symphony in C minor—unlike Mendelssohn, of whom Cherubini said, "*Il dépense trop de son Stoffe*"—seems to us to make a great deal too much out of little. As an instance of this, we would point to the first *allegro* (in C minor), prefaced by a slow introduction, in which two of the chief themes of the succeeding movement are foreshadowed. Here the materials are hardly of sufficient weight to support the lengthy and elaborate development to which they are submitted; so that, in consequence of overwrought treatment, the general impression left by the movement is one of comparative dryness; and this despite passages of real energy and occasional snatches of melody, like bits of sunshine through a prevalent atmosphere of gloom. The second movement, *andante sostenuto* (in the remote key of E major), is beautiful from first to last; full of tender, graceful melody, constructed upon a

very expressive theme, and developed with masterly continuity. Here the episodic matter is everywhere of proportionate interest. The third movement, *un poco allegretto e grazioso* (A flat), is built upon a quaint theme in five-bar measure, which might well pass for a national melody. This has a second part (in B), which serves as *alternative*, or "trio." The whole without being very original, or in other respects remarkable, is extremely pretty, and, together with the *andante* which precedes it, forms an agreeable resting place between the first and last sections of the work. The *finale*, believed to have been written years later than the other portions of the symphony, is unquestionably the most striking of the four movements into which it is divided. The exact meaning of the long introduction, in the minor key, with its *pizzicato* passages for stringed instruments, we are not as yet able to estimate at its value; but from the very commencement of the *allegro*, in the major, with its broad and ample theme, first given out by the stringed instruments, attention is arrested, and interest goes on increasing, step by step, to the end. The second theme is happily contrasted with the first; and the various episodic phrases are

The movement is long, but its interest never for an instant flags. It may be urged, that we are too often led in the course of this *finale* to expect climaxes never actually attained; but we seldom miss finding recompense in something new; and when we reach the much desired peroration it answers all expectations by its splendor. The *coda*, where the time is increased to "*poco allegro*," is glorious, and brings to a triumphant end a great, though unequal, work. We have reminiscences here and there, it is true, of the theme upon which the *finale* of Beethoven's Choral Symphony is constructed, and of much of the contrapuntal working out of the last movement in Mozart's so-styled "Jupiter;" but the entire structure is not the less substantial and consistent. If enthusiasts for Brahms would not persist in saying—"Here is a *finale* to be placed side by side with the *finale* of Beethoven's C minor, and that of Mozart's 'Jupiter,'" the work of Brahms might fairly claim the highest consideration on its own account, as something largely conceived and effectively accomplished. We have hinted that the performance was excellent; and the applause which Mr. Manns had to acknowledge at its conclusion showed plainly how the audience were of the same opinion. That the symphony in C minor will hold a permanent place in the Crystal Palace programmes cannot admit of a doubt. The bright and symmetrically built overture to Cherubini's *Faniska* opened the concert, which was brought to an end by the pretty ballet airs from M. Gounod's *Reine de Saba*. The vocalists were Miss Emily Thornton (her first appearance), who, in songs by Mozart and Benedict, made a favorable impression, and Mr. Edward Lloyd, who gave Mozart's "Dalla sua pace" and Mr. Sullivan's ballad, "Sometimes," in his most finished style. A young pianist, Miss Dora Schirmacher, played Mendelssohn's second concerto (D) with so much spirit and intelligence that she may be said to have made her position at once. Miss Schirmacher has an elastic touch, a legitimate tone, and great fluency of execution. If she continues to study with earnestness she has every chance of winning a prominent position in her art. The audience recalled her with enthusiasm.

### The Violin Manufacture in Italy, and its German Origin.

An Historical Sketch; by Dr. EDMUND SCHRECK. Translated from the German by WALTER E. LAWSON.

(Continued from Page 4.)

#### III.

That which not a little assisted its advancement was, the successive inheritance by members of the same family. Before the Amati, we find, in Ven-

ice, the Duiffopruggars and Linarollos carrying on the trade throughout generations; and the period during which the Amati labored in this field extended over a century and a half. Beside these, flourished the families of the Guarneri and Ruger, followed by the Guadagnini and Berganzi, each of which probably existed throughout a century. In Brescia, we meet with the families of Maggini and Zanetto; in Milan, of the Grancini, and Testore; in Venice, of the Novellos, Tononi, and Goffriller; while, in Naples, the Gagliani have continued to exist from the 17th century to the present day—latterly, however, only as string manufacturers.

Upon the tickets which they were in the habit of affixing to their productions, it was not uncommon for them to give their genealogy; thus—N. N., the son (grandson, or nephew,) of N. N. In this manner, Nicholas Amati, for instance, carries his genealogy back to his grandfather. Often the native town was named; and it was customary to mention the master, or the school—more especially if it could be referred to Cremona, and to Nicholas Amati, or Stradivari. Sometimes the names of firms, such as *Antonius and Hieronymus Amati*; *Fratelli Grancini*, are met with. Through such remarks, and the mention of name, place, and date, these tickets became a most important—nay, in most cases, the only source for obtaining the history of this interesting branch of art; but, unfortunately, their use is rendered difficult by the fact that trickery has often been resorted to, whereby genuine instruments from which the proper tickets have been removed, are provided with false ones, while spurious specimens are furnished with genuine tickets. Experience and caution are therefore necessary to avoid error. The directors, etc., of museums, and of the libraries of musical societies, should regard it as a duty to assist the investigation, by securing, at every opportunity, exact copies of genuine labels.

A more certain source would be opened up in the registers of births, marriages, and deaths. At present, this source has only been made use of with regard to the Amati, Stradivari, and Guarneri, through the unwearying efforts of J. B. Vuillaume, who has regarded it as a pious duty towards his illustrious models; and by S. Ruf, who is to be accredited with similar researches respecting Stainer.

In the case then of these masters, *connoisseurs* are no longer likely to be deceived by labels of instruments dating from a time when the makers were either dead or not yet born, or were still boys at school. Such anachronisms occurred repeatedly in the announcements for the Vienna Exhibition. Even Spohr dated the demise of Stradivari at about forty years later than the actual time; consequently, as, according to Vuillaume's researches, his birth took place in the year 1644, he must have attained to the age of nearly one hundred and forty years! It were to be wished that such "historical disinformation" could be extended to the remaining representatives of the Italian violin manufacture; the history of this department would then soon secure a strong foundation. Again, in the family of Guadagnini, the existence of a certain Joannes Baptista was considered as proved beyond doubt; he was stated to have lived in the eightieth year of the last century; but the fact was overlooked, that, a hundred years earlier, a Joannes Baptista Guadagnini worked independently; and that consequently there must have been at least two masters bearing that name. The active life of Alexander Mezzadrie, of Ferrara, was fixed between the years 1690 and 1710; but genuine instruments of his make, with genuine labels dating from the year 1616, are still in existence. Errors of this, and similar kinds—of which many instances might be mentioned, pass from one work to another, because the searching light of criticism has not yet been brought to bear upon the subject.

To root them out, there are two methods which recommend themselves. The first of these consists in the examination of church-registers, and of such trade-registers as are still in existence. This is a task for clergymen, communal officers, keepers of archives, and local historians.

On the preparation for the Vienna Exhibition, I had, already, this and similar objects in view. The Italian Government was to have been petitioned to give the impulse—for it must be regarded as the national duty of Italy to throw more light upon a branch of art in which it attained to the highest rank. To the Germans may be recommended a similar procedure, with regard to the names of native artists, who, as we shall see hereafter, introduced the violin manufacture into Italy. Particularly should their attention be turned to the history of German lute manufacture, which, in several Bava-

rian towns, to-wit, Nuremberg, and Munich, and perhaps also in the Tyrol, must have formerly attained to considerable development.

The second requisite, is the avoidance of all generalization—i. e., nothing should be advanced with regard to which the slightest doubt exists; and, in case of uncertainty, the source should be mentioned, whereby persons are placed in a position to make further enquiries into the matter, and are not induced to grant it a greater amount of credence than it really deserves. It is best to mention each label, or each date, in connection with the instrument from which it is quoted, and to give the external peculiarities, referring only to the instrument on which they are apparent, and not—as a well-known writer on musical subjects, who in this province must be read with caution, has often done; namely, constructed whole periods from one date or other, and observed in single instruments the particular tendencies evinced by a master during a whole life, or a succession of different periods.

An excellent preparation for a reliable history of the Italian violin manufacture would be found in a statistic of those of its productions which have been left to us—such as has already been commenced by M. Jules Gally, of Paris. But, in such a case, the masters must be clearly denoted, and the external peculiarities of the instruments described in an unmistakable manner.

After this digression, let us return to the historical sketch of our subject.

It was but natural that the violin manufacture, which had acquired such importance in Italy, should exert an influence upon other countries. Whether Jacob Stainer (born 1621, died 1683), the celebrated master of Absam, near Innsbruck, served his apprenticeship at Cremona, as was formerly asserted, must, after the thorough researches of his latest biographers, remain undecided. He was unable to withdraw himself from the influence of the Amati, as his truly but seldom genuine—works (imitations, bearing the name of his firm, particularly from the old Mettenwalder manufactory, are circulated by hundreds), show. He went to greater extremes in the curve of the breasts than was justified by the model of Nicholas Amati, whereby his instruments acquired a peculiar—from the Italian—widely differing quality of tone, more resembling that of a flute than of strings—which, however, was not wanting in beauty, and formerly enjoyed general appreciation, although at the present day it finds no favor with artists. But in his works may be traced an independency of procedure. He understood how to render the effect of these coarser curves milder by a suitable thinness of the parts; and, further, to give the violin model a certain original individuality, by the perfect accordance of all its parts. But for all that, his imitators—and among the Germans he had many—seized now upon this, now upon that detail, partly following up new ideas; and so led the violin manufacture in Germany into bye-paths.

#### IV.

After Stainer's time, we find—if the labels do not deceive us—Gerrans established in Cremona; for instance, the two Pfeetzshners, and Fricker. From the inscriptions upon violins, we also learn that the Germans at Cremona produced formal tests of mastership. David Techler, in Rome, Hans Mann, in Naples, and the three Goffriller (Gottfried), in Venice, were Germans. Whether the illustrious family of Ruger was of German descent is questionable, seeing that the name Ruger is there likewise native.

On the other hand, Italian violin makers settled in foreign countries. With the Albini, they pushed forward their outposts towards Bozen and Gratz. Others settled in London, Paris, Lyons, and Barcelona. Even in Constantinople, there lived, at the end of the 17th century, an Italian violin-maker, who, however, was sufficiently acute to take into consideration the Oriental taste, when decorating his instruments.

As everything in this life, so the classical period of violin manufacture came to a close. Enigmatical, like its beginning, but still more sudden, was its decline. Neither for the one nor the other have we sufficient grounds for explanation. Without observing a corresponding progress in the art of violin playing, we find the masters from whom the epoch of violin manufacture dates, progressing to ever greater perfection. After the Duiffopruggars, Amati, Stradivari, and Guarneri, came slowly limping Baltazarini, Corelli, Tartini, and Viotti; and from the moment when violin virtuosity reached its zenith, hardly a trace is left of Italian violin manufacture. It would seem that the power of its rep-



representatives ceased immediately on the attainment of the long sought for ideal. After Straduari and Guarneri, it still continued for a time to assert itself under several of their pupils, and contemporaries; but, in the hands of the immediate successors of these latter, its degeneration became more and more apparent; and, before long, the manufacture had entirely vanished. Peculiarly enough, a foreigner—the Frenchman, Michel Decouet, concluded the period which had been commenced by Germans.

The hypothesis, that the violin manufacture in Italy was founded by Germans, I have already advanced in an article in the *Vienna Presse*, of the 27th October, 1872, (reprinted in the *Gazetta di Venezia*, on the 11th April, 1873). Since that time, no facts have reached me which militate against it; but, rather, such as strengthen it. The following are, in brief, the grounds upon which it is based.

A mustering of instruments at the chateau of Count Lobkowitz, Eisenberg, brought to light several old lutes. Two of these, of fine workmanship, have the inscription—"Laut Maler," (Lucas Maler, the "Amati of lutes," in 1415, at Bologna); a third, to all appearance of similar date, the name of "Marx Unverdorben a Venetia." The establishment in Italy of these undoubted German lute-makers, shows that at this period the profession was either not native, or did not occupy a like high position with that in Germany, where, in the 15th century, Johann Oit, and Hans Frei—the father-in-law of Albrecht Dürer—and the family, Gerle, all of Nuremberg, had attained to celebrity as lute-makers. With lute-making, the manufacture of bow instruments has much in common. The most celebrated Italian violin-makers—for instance, Gaspar da Salo, and Stradivarius—did not disdain to manufacture lutes; while, before them, in addition to lutes, Dardelli and the Linarollos made violas; and Duifopugcar, violas and violins. Indeed, there was an instrument which served to link together the two species, viz., the bow-lyre (lire d'arco). In Germany, as long as the lute remained in use, we have evidence that its manufacture was always associated with that of violins, constituting a single profession; as, even at the present day, occasional trade nomenclature shows. In France, there is no other name for the violin-maker than "luthier," which word evidently bears reference to the lute, (luthe), period. Is it then unlikely that these old German lute makers, Lucas Maler, of Bologna, and Marx Unverdorben, of Venice, together with the later Magno Stegher, of Venice (a German Tyrolean—the name occurs in other German districts, with the orthography, Stöger), one of whose lutes, apparently of the time of Duifopugcar, I met with at the Monastery of the Augustines, Neustift, near Brixen—also manufactured violins?

Certainly not a very hazardous conclusion. But even if we argue solely with regard to the production of violins, we shall be equally successful in finding a German origin.

The, as yet, oldest known violin and viola makers, are Kerlino, Dardelli, and Duifopugcar. To these may now be added the hitherto unknown master, Johannes Andreas, of Verona, a viola of whose make bearing the date 1511, I found in the Archducal Museum, Modena, at Vienna. Although a splendid specimen, its form is too grotesque to admit of the maker—whose family name still remains unknown—being ranked, by reason of this single instrument, with the professional string instrument makers. Among the above named, only Dardelli may be considered an Italian. He is believed to have lived in Mantua, about the year 1500, and to have manufactured, in addition to lutes, violas of the old description. We find no mention of him whatever as a maker of the violin proper; and, as a monk—he is called l'adre Dardelli—he appears to have followed the art more as an amateur. The two others, Kerlino and Duifopugcar, are of German nationality.

[To be Continued.]

### The Gewandhaus Concerts at Leipzig.

[Correspondence of the Philada. Evening Bulletin.]

LEIPZIG, March 26th, 1877.—The musical season may now be considered about closed. The last of the twenty-one Gewandhaus concerts was given last Thursday evening, and as the hall, so rich and almost sacred with its memories of Mendelssohn and Schumann, was slowly being vacated, while the last chord of the wonderful seventh symphony in A, of Beethoven, was still lingering in the souls of the listeners, an attentive observer might have read gratitude and pleasure in the faces of every one of them.

The new volume which has just been finished in the history of the Gewandhaus will surely compare favorably with any of its predecessors, both as to quality and quantity; every, even the highest, expectation has been realized. An idea of the activity of the Gewandhaus will be conveyed by the following: The programmes of the season embraced 22 symphonies, 21 overtures, 19 concertos, and 12 arias with orchestral accompaniment, 6 choral compositions, 23 songs and 19 instrumental solos.

Of symphonies were performed 7, all but the first and second, of Beethoven; the four of Schumann, both of Schubert's, two each of Haydn and Mozart. Brahms, Raff, Goldmark, Götte and Jadassohn were each represented by a new symphony. The composers represented, alphabetically arranged, were: Auer, Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Brassin, Bruch, Cherubini, Chopin, David, Davidoff, Ernst, Franz, Gade, Gluck, Götte, Grieg, Handel, Haydn, Hoffmann, Hinrichs, Jadassohn, Lalo, Liszt, Löwe, Marschner, Massenet, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Popper, Raff, Reinecke, Reisinger, Rheinberger, Richter, Rossini, Rubinstein, Saint-Saëns, Schubert, Schumann, Spaydel, Spohr, Tartini, Tschaykowski, Vieuxtemps, Volkmann, Weber, Wieniawski and Wagner. The soloists were the violinists: Joachim, Auer, DeAbna, Sarasate, Sauret and Schradieck.

Pianists—Clara Schumann, Door, Reinecke, Nissen-Lie, Brassen, Emery and Schirmacher.

Vocalists—Küller-Murjahn, Peschka-Leutner, Schlimon-Regan, Hill, Henschel and Bula.

Violoncellists—Schürder and Klengel.

On two occasions was the Gewandhaus all aglow with enthusiasm: when Clara Schumann, the wife of the great Robert Schumann, like one inspired, played her husband's A Minor Concerto, and when Johannes Brahms (the same of whom Schumann so prophetically and beautifully speaks in his "Musik und Musiker" introduced in person his new symphony in C minor.

Clara Schumann is far beyond all praise. To hear her interpret her husband's dreamy music is to be thrilled and touched to the core. Her playing has that wonderfully sympathetic power which will hold her audience spellbound from the moment she begins until she ceases playing.

Brahms, with his grand work, took the audience by storm and enthroned himself victoriously for all times (?) to come. His great success is all the more remarkable, the Gewandhaus being, as many of your readers may know, decidedly conservative in its tendency.

Two other notable events were the appearances of Joachim, the king of violinists, and Reinecke, who, as a pianist, has perhaps but one (?) superior in Rubinstein, while as a Mozart player he has no equal.

I do not wish to conclude without having made special mention of Capellmeister Reinecke and his able concert-meister, Röntgen, two noble artists, who, the former since 1861, the latter since David's death, stand at the head of the orchestra. The laurel wreath which crowned the conductor's stand last Thursday honored the receiver not less than the giver.

JOHN F. HINMELBACH.

### Music in London.

PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS. Good service was done at the concert given on Thursday night by the production—first time in England—of the third part of Schumann's music to Goethe's *Faust*. The accomplishment of this work, Professor Macfarren tells us, seems to have been an object of Schumann's ambition for many years. It is difficult, however, to reconcile ardor in the task with the fitful manner of its discharge and the long time that intervened between the beginning and end of the labor. Schumann's original idea was obviously limited to setting only the last scene of the second part of the tragedy, and this he began to carry out in 1844, finishing in 1848, between which time and 1853, when the overture was written, he added music to the various scenes that make up Parts 1 and 2. When completed, the whole was produced at Dresden, and, according to Professor Macfarren, "acknowledged as a masterpiece by the musical world of Germany, many persons declaring that they, for the first time, understood the *Faust* of Goethe through the music of Schumann." The verdict so promptly given may be in all respects true, but the time is certainly not ripe for the popularity of the work. Two reasons are assignable for this:—first, as regards the portion heard on Thursday night, the mystical nature of the poetic theme, which presents little of the clearness and definiteness that make up the grand essential of verse intended for musical illustration. Dramatic power being absent, moreover, the interest of the words lies almost entirely in the profundity of their meaning—a profundity so great that there is need to consider them apart from mu-

sic in order to gauge, in any exact measure, the truth of their musical expression. This fact could not but influence Schumann, who found in it precisely that which was congenial to his intellectual mood. Although fond of composing descriptive music and of allowing himself to be guided by the influence of external things, he was, perhaps more than any other, a subjective musician. At all events, he appears at his best when, having withdrawn, so to speak, within himself, he communes with his own thoughts. With a characteristic such as this, it is no wonder Schumann fastened upon the poetry of Goethe, which afforded him such matter for musical meditation. No wonder, either, that he commented upon it in the language of his art with reference to nothing but absolute faithfulness of expression, as that was by him understood. Herein we have a clue to much in the *Faust* music which could never have been written with the simple object of pleasing the public ear. Number after number, like the allied text, requires to be read again and again, and looked at from divers points of view, before its meaning and appositeness becomes evident, and, as the public generally are not disposed to take so much trouble, it will be some time before Schumann's work is received into favor. The musician, of course, finds much in it, as in everything from the same pen, worthy admiration, and there are portions so beautiful even to the casual listener, that he can hardly refuse to hear the whole again and again. If, therefore, exuberant enthusiasm was not aroused on Thursday night, the Philharmonic directors need not despair of adding the *Faust* music to their permanent repertory. It will bear hearing—and, mayhap, find an increasing number of hearers—time after time. The performance, conducted by Mr. W. G. Cousins, scarcely did justice to its subject, but sufficed to convey a general idea of the composer's intention. As the theme becomes more familiar, its interpretation will doubtless improve. The soloists, who may generally be commended, were Mesdames Osgood, Mary Davies, Duval, Irene Ware, Bolingbroke, Steel, and Belmar; Messrs. Guy, Wadmore, and Pope.

Other important features in this concert were Sterndale Bennett's charming overture, *Paolina*; Beethoven's "Choral Fantasia," played, as to the pianoforte solo, by Miss Agnes Zimmermann in her usual correct and musicianly style; and the ever-welcome overture to *Der Freischütz*. Mrs. Osgood sang the Death song from Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* in such a manner as to win hearty commendation even from those who least like the music. She is an artist capable of interpreting Wagner aright, and this may have had something to do with an encore that could hardly have arisen from admiration of a *scena* which, however faithfully it may express the emotion of the words in the consciousness of the composer, is certainly not beautiful.

D. T.

—London Musical World, March 31.

JOACHIM'S ELEGANT OVERTURE. Writing on the Crystal Palace concert of March 17th, the *Sunday Times* thus refers to Herr Joachim's new overture:—

"The most important amongst these works was the overture which Herr Joachim wrote for his Cambridge 'Exercise' on the occasion of receiving his diploma. It is dedicated to the memory of the patriotic poet, Herr Heinrich von Kleist, whose unhappy career and self-sought death are familiar events in the annals of German history; but it is not to be considered in any way as a piece of programme music. Indeed, as the writer in the Cambridge programmes appositely states—'The title of the composition sets forth, in some sort, its purpose; but in some sort only, for the overture aims not to depict the circumstances of the poet's life in whose honor it is written, not even to picture, through the most free mediums of expression, his character as an artist, a patriot, and a sufferer; it is designed as an utterance of the composer's sympathy with a man whose genius and whose fate won his love and his reverence.' It is difficult to gauge such a work as this by ordinary art forms, inasmuch as the incidents which instigated its production might well lead an author into involuntary departure from canonical rule, for the better representation of his ideas. Herr Joachim (whose name we would prefix with his new titular denomination of 'Dr.,' if we thought any more dignity would accrue to it) is too firm an upholder of legitimacy in art, however, to be betrayed into any semblance of error and exaggeration; his overture may, therefore, be taken as a model of form and at the same time a master-

piece of true emotional expression. The beauty of the ideas, no less than their complete earnestness and remarkable continuity, entitle the work to rank with *chef-d'œuvre* written on a similar plan. There is infinite technical skill displayed in the evolution and working out of the component parts; but Herr Joachim is no pedant, and never wilfully indulges in intricate combinations merely to show that he has all the resources a musician can need at command. Grace, subtlety, and a certain idyllic charm not easily expressed in words, are to be found in this "Elegiac" overture, but the tenderness and sympathetic quality of certain passages are lit up by occasional flashes of passionate energy and true martial fire. Notwithstanding the gloomy subject on which the overture is founded, it is neither sombre in character nor heavy in treatment, but pervaded by a certain sweetness of sentiment irresistibly touching and infinitely attractive. There is no necessity to say that the orchestra is handled with the facility of a musician conversant with all its capabilities—Herr Joachim's character as an instrumental writer being already established on too firm a footing. Cambridge ought to feel proud of having caused the production of Herr Joachim's overture; it is true that Alma Mater paid for it with a degree, but the price was none too high."

**THE POPULAR CONCERTS.** The nineteenth season of these concerts ended on Monday, with the usual "Director's Benefit," which, we are happy to say, was a bumper, the hall being crowded in every part. Thus does Mr. S. Arthur Chappell go on reaping the deserved reward of enterprise and perseverance as well as of faithfulness to a lofty ideal. Let no one remark here that all these qualities are easy of exercise when the tide of success runs strong. The proposition is, in the abstract, perfectly true; but there was a time when the Popular Concerts were almost aground in low water—when classical chamber music was not "popular," and when its presentation year after year demanded important sacrifices, together with no common faith in eventual good fortune. It is for gallantly sticking to his ship under such circumstances that present success takes the form of a special act of justice, and becomes a source of unalloyed gratification to all who desire the progress of music. Moreover, the lesson it conveys is worth having at a time when so many enterprises are begun only to be abandoned after a feeble struggle. "By perseverance," said Dr. Johnson, "the quarry becomes a pyramid," and we all grant the truth of his remark. Nevertheless, it is well to have the pyramid, and the hole out of which it arose, often before one's eyes.

The programme, as customary on these occasions, was of extra length, the artists were numerous, and the works performed of recognized attraction. Indeed, the character of the representations made it resemble the "artists' concert," which, in Germany, so agreeably winds up musical festivals, each leading performer having the choice of a solo for the exhibition of his own special powers. Thus, M<sup>me</sup>. Schumann was heard in the "Scènes mignonnes sur quatre notes," entitled "Carnaval," written in 1834 by her famous husband. Strictly speaking, we should say that the distinguished lady played only a selection from these fanciful effusions, the ability with which she interpreted those chosen making us the more regret that any were passed over. That all their beauty was set forth will be assumed; but not often, perhaps, has M<sup>me</sup>. Schumann thrown so much vigor or rhythmic power into the "March of the Davidsbündler against the Philistines." She was twice called back to receive enthusiastic applause. Miss Marie Krebs contributed a novelty at these concerts in the shape of three studies from the set of twelve, known as Chopin's Op. 25. Such charming examples of the Polish musician's fancy required no more than the help of M<sup>lle</sup>. Krebs's nimble fingers and sparkling style to be at once taken on the list of favorites by all, if any, who had not before made their acquaintance. The young artist, like her more experienced countrywoman, earned the thanks of her audience, warmly expressed. Dr. Joachim's solo was the prelude and fugue by Bach in G minor, which on former occasions had served him as *cheval de bataille*. How he played it we need not tell, since the labor would be as superfluous as a description of the manner in which his performance was received. Worthy of association with the Hungarian master's effort was that of Signor Piatti in Nos. 1, 2, and 4 of Schumann's "Stücke im Violoncello," for violoncello and pianoforte (M<sup>me</sup>. Schumann). Anything more exquisite than this artist's singing of the melody in F

major (No. 2) cannot be imagined. It was the perfection of skill and taste. Other concerted pieces in the programme were Beethoven's magnificent Quartet in E flat (Op. 74), played by MM. Joachim, Ries, Zerbini, and Piatti; and Nos. 5, 6, and 7 of Brahms's Hungarian Dances, as arranged by Joachim for violin and pianoforte. In the hands of the arranger, with Miss Krebs at the pianoforte, these pretty trifles were safe; and with them the Popular Concert season came to a delightful end. The vocalists were M<sup>lle</sup>. Redeker, Friedländer, and Sophie Löwe, all of whom gave satisfaction, the first two being specially successful in Rubinstein's lovely duet, "Der Engel." Sir Julius Benedict conducted.—*Telegraph*.

### Die Walküre in Boston.

[From the Daily Advertiser, April 17.]

Boston has had its first hearing of Wagner's "Die Walküre." If a verdict had been asked of the weary throng as it was leaving the theatre at half-past eleven o'clock last night, Richard Wagner, and his trilogy and his theories would have fallen under one sweeping condemnation. This morning, we are aware, things will be different; the Wagnerites will have girded up their loins anew and found their tongues once more; the half-converted will have forgotten their fatigue and distress, and again be almost persuaded to swell the fashionable chorus of admiration; in a word, everything and everybody will be ready for a fierce renewal of the endless warfare of words concerning the great German and his music. But for ourselves we must beg to be excused just at present, confessing to an overwhelming sense of weariness with the discussion and to a doubt of its immediate usefulness. The work itself also, we shall not attempt to analyze in detail. That task has already been performed with quite sufficient minuteness by our own correspondents at Bayreuth and by those of other newspapers; and "Die Walküre," as well as the rest of the trilogy, has been carefully scrutinized, both from the literary and the musical points of view.

We shall offer this morning only a few general comments upon the work, with a statement of two or three of the more vivid impressions produced by single scenes. Our readers will scarcely need to be reminded, we suppose, that "Die Walküre" and its fellows are the last and most complete utterances of their author's theory of composition. The imperfections, vocal, scenic and orchestral, in last night's performances of course reduced the pleasure of the listener much below what he would have received from a Bayreuth interpretation. But in spite of all faults, the representation of last night will suffice to give any listener who has been blest with a particle of analytic power some idea of the scope and purpose of Wagner's latest style of music, and some notion, if he will but deal honestly with himself, of his own relation to and enjoyment of such music. After listening to "Die Walküre," one certainly ought to begin to make up his mind whether for him recitative has worthily superseded all other forms of musical expression, and whether asymmetrical melody or tune is merely a useless and vacuous invention of the past; whether the orchestra or the voices in an opera are to do the chief work of accompanying; whether the charm of vocal harmony ought to be utterly denied,—giving himself the benefit of an exception in favor of the wild, barbaric choral screams of *Brünnhilde* and her sisters,—and almost a whole work made up of dialogue, where each voice in turn and alone winds through intricate mazes of recitative; whether—to condense our last clause—the world of beauty, sublimity and power, the possibility of effective climax and the capacity of intense expression given to vocal concerted music is to be discarded in opera as a merely worthless thing. We ask the candid reader to consider these matters once more—these and the hundred other thoughts which they suggest—in the lurid light shed by this work, and to make answer as to the worth and beauty and probable longevity of the new style of operatic composition. The accomplished musical critic of the Tribune, whom we must hold responsible for a recent leader in that paper on the subject of Wagner's music, waives for the sake of argument all other modes of defending that music, and—moved by the flagrant faults in the performances which were the occasion of the essay and which he felt would cloud the composer's fame with his auditors in New York—suggests that Wagner may be the inventor and chief producer of a kind of music which is only capable of producing great effects when it is illustrated by or itself illustrates magnificent scenery and perfect

stage appointments. That is a terrible form of admission, according to our idea; for if that be really the character of Wagner's music he cannot rank even as a third-rate composer. The best in such a kind will be inferior enough, and will never need or ask the assistance of genius, where talents and industry will suffice.

Looking at "Die Walküre" itself more simply we must say that, while it shows its composer's theory in what we regard as its naked baldness and vileness, it also shows the author's great intellectual power, his learning, culture, force of character, and immense grasp of mind. The orchestral effects are just wonderful, and the variety of beautiful forms, the intricate harmonic combinations effected for the instruments, and the tremendous fullness of the orchestral climaxes, are beyond description; and sometimes almost beyond praise. The highest dramatic power can never be reached, we conceive, with such barrenness of vocal combination, but it is marvellous how so much can be attained with the appliances that are used. The love scene between *Siegfried* and *Sieglinde* abounds especially in thrilling passages, and the music in which the lover speaks of spring and its suggestions is exquisitely idyllic and romantic too,—a combination not easily effected. Of course, there are many grand passages suitable for broad, sustained declamation, and of these the most remarkable is *Brünnhilde's* appeal to *Wotan* after she has been left alone to face his wrath. The story is grim and bloody enough, but it is a fascinating fragment of a great imaginative poem, and the libretto, as usual, is written with eloquent directness and power. The whole opera concludes with its most brilliant and captivating music, viz., that which accompanies *Wotan's* invocation of Loge "the fire-god," and which was made familiar to us at Mr. Thomas's concerts two seasons ago. The "Ride of the Walkvries" also has a wild, fantastic power, which it is not easy to gainsay or resist.

The performance was open to a good deal of severe criticism; but in view of the appalling difficulties of the work we cannot find it in our heart to be minutely severe. Madame Pappenheim's *Brünnhilde* was fine in action and magnificent in song, wanting only the highest imaginative grace on the histrionic side to be entirely satisfying. The artiste also looked the character grandly, and the pleasure of beholding her in her shield and helmet was one of the chief delights of the evening. Of Madame Pauline Canessa as *Sieglinde*; and of Mr. Bischoff as *Siegfried* about the same things are to be said; that they were exceedingly earnest and so zealous that it was a great pity they had neither voice nor presence to fill their parts properly. Mr. Blum gave a careful and on the whole a strong performance of *Hunding*. Mr. Preusser as *Wotan* was dignified and intense; but he had not the requisite force of voice or action, or the majesty of presence, which the character demanded. The eight ladies who appeared as *Walkvries* sang their difficult music roughly and inharmoniously, and there was a great deal of such singing from all the principals except Madame Pappenheim throughout the evening. Not a great deal was attempted in the way of scenery, and for this we beg to express our thanks. The optical effects were well enough, and the approach of the daughters of *Wotan* on the clouds was certainly not ridiculous, but the introduction of *Brünnhilde's* steed was foolish and tame in the extreme.

[From the Globe, April 17.]

Mr. Fryer's second series of Wagner entertainments was opened last night with the long-promised "Die Walküre," which was witnessed by a fair-sized house, not as large as one would have expected from the importance of the event. For it certainly cannot be denied that the event was important, whatever value one may set upon the theories which the opera involves. There is no possible reason for denying that in this work Wagner has shown himself in "full blow," with his sentiments matured, stiffened and dogmatized. We confess to turning away from the opera with a saddened and a confused feeling. One may easily understand that the first hearing of such a work necessarily leaves confused, undefined sensations; as to the sad feeling, it was perhaps the result of the aforesaid indistinctness. But Wagner did not appear to us in his most enviable light. A man who is only verging towards extremes may do things which, even if they are startling, are commendable for their originality or freshness; but when a man has drifted into irredeemable radicalism, without hope of promise or reclaim, that man rather disgusts



sober-minded men, as a specimen of what one's enthusiasm may do when uncurbed. Herr Wagner is radical beyond hope of recall; but he seems like one who fritters away splendid opportunities in order to show to what extent his vagaries may reach. If this seems uncharitable, it has its root in the performance of "Die Walküre" last night. Notwithstanding our inability to form a judgment on the first hearing, we may at least record our impressions, and they were not pleasant. The work, as a whole, seemed like a very desert-like expanse in the realm of music, with only an occasional oasis. With a splendid, almost incomparable mastery of instrumentation, Wagner has for the most part given over the score to the production of weird and discordant effects, or, if not discordant, at least intellectually unmelodious. The most pleasing parts are the recurring themes which are made to signify impersonations of the different characters; yet these seem hardly as marked or as effective as in "Lohengrin," for instance. In the vocal parts there are little phrases now and then of rare loveliness, but there is so much that is hard, dry and uncompromising that one is liable to forget the pleasing passages. The great difficulty of expressing god-like feelings in human phraseology may account for it in some measure, and the vaulting ambition of the composer may explain the rest, especially the outrageously high notes which grace, or disgrace, some of the solo parts. The combined effect of instrumentation and vocal parts is to make one wish that the tone painting and the rich "form" of the author might have been used largely, and not discarded so recklessly. Yet we quite agree with those who found much in the opera to enjoy, and can easily unite in lauding the grandiose, if deafening, results of some phrases, and the fierce, life-like energy that found vent oftentimes in the most "real" sort of music. This ought to atone for anything which we have said in a seemingly detractive spirit; and we will frankly confess that with a more perfect and a larger orchestra, and with all the accessories provided at Bayreuth, we can imagine that the work would have sounded more like the music that "the future," which has become the present, should at least defer to if not accept.

The plan of the work is too long to be given in detail, but in few words it may thus be stated. Siegmund and Sieglinde are twin children of Wotan by an earthly mother. They are separated in their youth and meet at the opening of the opera, where Siegmund has come to the cottage of Hunding, the husband of Sieglinde. The two men are found to be enemies, but Hunding promises his guest a peaceful night, challenging him to mortal combat at dawn. During the night the brother and sister discover their relationship by the ability of Siegmund to pull from an ash tree supporting the roof a sword imbedded to the hilt, some years before, by Wotan, then unknown to the mortals before whom he did the deed. Wotan proposes to defend Siegmund in the fight, and summons Brünnhilde for the purpose, but desists through the demand of his wife, Fricka, who looks with dislike upon the separation of Sieglinde from her husband. Brünnhilde finds sufficient cause, in admiration for Siegmund, whom she in vain warns of the result of the battle and summons to Walhalla to protect him. But Wotan appears against her and Siegmund is slain; while Hunding is frightened to death at seeing Wotan after the battle. Brünnhilde is alarmed at having defied her father, and he condemns her to sleep till awakened by a man whom, as her husband, she should serve. He accedes to her request, however, and surrounds her with a circle of fire, that he who approaches her should be a hero worthy of her.

To speak of the singing as a whole we should say much that is pleasant. We will say at once that we can readily allow a place to the shortcomings, in view of the extremely high range of much of the music. As when here before, we noticed among the singers that tendency to explosiveness and that frequency of false intonation which is not pleasant, and which seriously blemishes the work of artists. Mme. Pappenheim retained the impression she already had made, that of a singer whose mind and soul are both in her work, and who strives zealously to give an intelligent impersonation. If her stage presence has not that vitality and sprightliness which one could wish, it certainly has much in every way to commend, and positively nothing to offend. In her difficult work she sustained her part exceedingly well, and, taking into account the amount of singing she has done for the last few weeks, she keeps her voice remarkably clear, strong, pure and sympathetic. Mme. Canissa is a new com-

er, who is an addition to the list of good, but not of brilliant singers. Had she a voice somewhat stronger, or the same voice under a trifle better control, she could sing more firmly; but aside from the quality in which it lacked, the voice was agreeable, and was used with fluency. Mme. Canissa is rather a stiff actress, but her honest endeavors make up for what would otherwise be less excusable. Of the men, it is needless to say anything individually. They all sang carefully, faithfully, and with intensity, though they did fail somewhat in accuracy. Their acting was fair. Of the Walkyres the less said is perhaps easiest. They sang some very trying music, and sang some music very trying. They sang other music better, but as a whole they only half performed an almost thankless task. The orchestra, enthusiastically led by Mr. Neuendorff, did some capital work—and some that was rough and coarse. The stage setting was good, and the clouds, fire, etc., well managed. The effect might have been heightened by lowering the light in the auditorium.

[From the Evening Gazette, April 21.]

#### THE "WALKÜRE," AND "FIDELIO."

There was not a very large audience, at which we were somewhat surprised, for we believed that curiosity, at least, would have attracted a crowded house. Those who stayed away, however, have no reason to reproach themselves, for they missed nothing except learning the extent to which Wagner has carried his extreme theories of art. Here he has ridden his hobby-horse to death. With the exception of a love duet in the first act, which is an exquisite conception exquisitely carried out, the opera is rampant jargon. It is barely possible that the artists did but scant justice to the composer, and that the orchestra was not all that it should have been; but, surely, the performance was careful and conscientious enough to permit whatever was striking in the work to be seen, if through a glass darkly. With the exception we have named, we discovered nothing but a vague attempt to represent by music that which cannot be so represented. It was insufferably tiresome and yawn-provoking. Doubtless many will find manifold intellectual beauties in it, but to us the whole seemed like a horrid night-mare, giving rise to painful suspense, provoking to the patience, unlovely, unmeaning. Of course, it goes without saying that there were numberless superb orchestral and harmonic effects, but these alone do not constitute music. It may be said that a single hearing is not sufficient for the proper understanding and appreciation of such a composition; but while there is so much noble music already in existence that will better repay study, we are not prepared to devote ourselves to finding out the minute meanings of music which, even when heard at its best and thoroughly understood, cannot give satisfaction proportionate to the labor necessary to a comprehension of its composer's vagaries of thought and of execution. Therefore, not understanding this music, and finding it impossible to understand it, we shall refrain from criticizing it, beyond placing upon record that, with the exception of the solitary duet in the first act, it struck us as hideous, brutal, uninteresting and extravagant. We have never been so thoroughly bored, so completely dispirited, so exasperated by waiting for that which never came, as we were in listening to this opera. It may possibly be fine music; great music; noble music, worthy to take the place hitherto usurped by such old-fashioned and wrong principled works as "Don Giovanni" and "Fidelio;" but, to our ears, it did not seem music at all, but an incomprehensible gibberish, a mad jangling of tones, a pompous burlesque upon all that is grand and pure in true art. One need not go so far as "Die Walküre" to find the supernatural fancy painted in the orchestra. The "Incantation Scene" in "Der Freyschütz" far surpasses the much-lauded "Ride of the Walkyres." All that Wagner has done is to carry Weber's wild and weird ideas one step further, and in doing so he has not improved upon his model, but has become extravagantly grotesque. We might have been more deeply impressed had the scenic display been upon a grander scale; but we set little value upon that music which needs either such adjuncts or a running commentary descriptive of the composer's meaning.

We were not perplexed on Thursday night to understand Beethoven's "Fidelio." What a blissful relief it was, after the bombast, the noise, the feverish unquiet, the struggling for bizarre originality, the sentimentalism, that distinguished the earli-

er operas of the week! We have assisted at better performances of the opera—much better. In fact, this representation was, on the whole, a very weak one, but it was impossible to place the composer entirely under a cloud. His effulgences would break through the heaviest gloom by which he could be surrounded. Here we had perfection of form, instead of the suggestion of an indistinct outline. Here, too, we had melody, or perhaps it would be better to say tune, since Wagner claims that his endless recitatives are also melody. Here was no lack of dramatic effect, either; nothing that made one feel that the composer had not given the proper passion and expression to his music—had not colored it appropriately, even though he did resort to simple means. Scenery, costumes, mechanical effects, were not necessary to make his meaning plainer. Were this opera played in a barn, with the barn-door mounted on trestles for a stage, and a sheet hung up for a scene, it would afford intelligent and intelligible enjoyment, interpreted by conscientious artists, even if not of the best quality. That is because it is music, symmetrical, inspired, melodious. How would Wagner's "Die Walküre" stand the same test? It would prove insufferable. That is because it is unsymmetrical, uninspired, unmelodious. It may be claimed that Wagner having written his music with a view to scenic effect, with a view to appeal to the eye as well as to the ear, we have no right to put it to a trial he never contemplated. To some extent such a claim would be just, but we must then class Wagner's operas as scenic dramas, with descriptive music, and not as operas in which the music is to be judged by itself. Wagner may have created a new species of musical entertainment, which may possibly bear the test of time, but he has not caused one bar of "Fidelio" to appear weak, antiquated or ineffective; he has not aroused one wish to hear how he would treat the same subject.

It has been urged that Beethoven was as much abused for his departure from old forms in "Fidelio" as Wagner has been for his heresies in "Die Walküre," and that the day may come when Wagner will be received as Beethoven has been. When that day comes Beethoven will have been forgotten; the chief merit of music will become monotony, and music from the soul will have given way to music from the head—dry, mechanical, mathematical music, about as attractive to any but scientists as a catalogue of fossil remains found in a chalk bed.

Of the performances of "Die Walküre" and of "Fidelio" we may speak in the same terms of general praise we bestowed upon this company on its former visit here, reserving now as then our warmest commendation for the orchestra and its able and energetic leader, Mr. Neuendorff. This gentleman vouchsafed us one of the most vigorous, most elegant and most inspiring renderings of the "Leonora" overture, No. 3, we have ever heard. Madame Pappenheim enacted Leonora with fine dramatic power, but the strain to which her voice had been put by the Wagner music she had been singing showed but too plainly, especially in the middle register. She sang, however, with rare intelligence, and acted with a strength and an intensity that almost atoned for the painful labor that was apparent in her vocal efforts. She achieved a great triumph in the Prison scene, and was deservedly applauded to the echo. Madame Canissa sang the music of Marcellina understandingly, and acted with spirit and force. Mr. Preusser interpreted Don Pizarro with the vigor and the intelligence he has shown in all of these performances. As Rocco, Mr. Franosch showed a perfect comprehension of the spirit of the part, and a full knowledge of its music; but he sang shockingly out of tune, and nearly ruined the concerted numbers in which he was interested. Mr. Fritsch manifested a keen sympathy with the music of Florestan, which he sang sweetly and with fervent conscientiousness. His acting was not so good, though it was lacking nothing in earnestness. Mr. William Formes gave a dignified presentation of Don Fernando, and sang exceedingly well. The choral work was all excellently done, the "Prisoner's Chorus" receiving a remarkably fine interpretation.

[From the Sunday Courier.]

However, much praise is due to Mr. Fryer and Mr. Neuendorff for their zeal, and devotion to their task, it cannot but be overbalanced by the blame due to them for undertaking such a task, one so far beyond their powers. As Carlyle says: "To be weak is not so shameful: but to be weaker than our task!" It was by no means absolutely necessary

that the *Walküre* should be given at all. If Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen* has lasting merit in it, there is no need of being in a hurry about performing it; but if it is to be performed at all, either in whole or in part, we do absolutely owe it to Herr Wagner that the performance should give at least an approximately adequate idea of the work. To say that Mr. Fryer's troupe did this would be the sheerest flattery. Even accounting such things as mise-en-scene and mere scenic get-up as unimportant accessories (which they are not), the performances were inadequate. No thinking person can wonder at the well-nigh distracted state of mind in which most of the audience came away from the *Walküre*. Just imagine the idea of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* that a man would form if he made his first acquaintance with it through the medium of a performance by Mr. Fryer's troupe! The parallel is not a forced one. With the exception of Madame Pappenheim, Mr. Fryer's artists are exactly as capable of acting *Hamlet* satisfactorily as they are of giving the *Walküre*. The misconceptions of what is required of performers by Wagner, that are current among us, are positively astounding. To believe many of our critics, it would seem as if the orchestra were the central point, the be-all and end-all of Wagner opera. On the contrary, the singing, the actors themselves are the central point of interest. It is the greatest mistake to imagine that the long pauses in the dramatic action, that cast such a damper upon the performances of last week, were intended by Wagner merely for the sake of giving prominence to certain bits of fine orchestral writing. Wagner would have no pauses in the dramatic action at all. If the actors have nothing to sing, they must still continue to act, the orchestra accompanying their action the while; their pantomime must be of the most vividly expressive kind, so expressive that the orchestra shall seem only the indispensable accompaniment to it, and not anything to claim particular attention for itself. With Wagner nothing ever happens in the orchestra unless it is justified and conditioned by something happening simultaneously on the stage. Now what are we to think of a performance in which the actors, when not actually singing are for the most part looking point blank at the conductor and palpably counting their bars? It is no slur upon Mr. Fryer's singers to say that they were for the most part utterly incompetent. They are singers, not actors. Mr. Edwin Booth would be no more out of place if he attempted the part of Pollione in *Norma* than Mr. Bischoff was in attempting the part of Siegmund. Even if Mr. Fryer's singers had been capable of doing justice to the mere music of their parts (which they were not), only one, almost secondary, element in the performances would have been what it should have been. No, without going further into detail, the performances of the *Walküre* were most regrettable. Instead of showing us Wagner as he is, they have done more than the most mistaken treatises, the most absurd criticisms—than mere silence even, could have done towards muddling and perverting our notions of the great poet-composer. Wagner writes music upon a dramatic, not a musical basis. But in the performance of the *Walküre*, in which there was neither musical form, nor dramatic basis, what else could be described save utter chaos? I am induced to speak thus strongly, simply from my intense admiration of the *Walküre*, as a work. It was more than thoughtless and rash, it was lamentably wanting in all due reverence, almost aesthetically criminal, to have attempted performing so great a work as the *Walküre*, in so new and unaccustomed a style, and hence so liable to be misunderstood, with means so necessarily inadequate. It was paying no honor to Wagner, doing him no service, only adding confusion to our already confused and distorted notions of his art-theories and his genius. Of course there were excellencies in the performance; the orchestra played unusually well, Madame Pappenheim shone so royally above her companions that she can only be spoken of with admiration, and there was also much to commend in M. Preusser's Wotan, and Mr. Blum's Hunding. But taking the performances as a whole especially as attempts to realize Wagner's ideal of the Musical Drama, the safest path lies in the direction of sorrowful silence—because the real gist of the work, the prominence of the dramatic element, and the cooperation of the music with the acting—in which cooperation the music, both vocal and instrumental, should always play the secondary, accompanying part—was lost. If our public had been familiar with the *Walküre*, and even been familiar with the class of musical drama of which the *Walküre* is one of the finest examples, it would have been different.

The listener's imagination, assisted by his knowledge of what artistic ends the work strives to accomplish, would have aided him in forming an adequate appreciation of its merits, and have led him to a correct comprehension of it. But the work was wholly new, even the style of the work was new and unaccustomed, so that the audience could only judge from what they actually heard and saw. Let me say again that much praise is due to all concerned for their efforts towards realizing the ideal they strove after; they are only to be blamed for attempting what there was no reasonable hope of their being able to accomplish.

WILLIAM F. ATTHORP.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, APRIL 28<sup>th</sup> 1877.

### German Opera.—Wagner.—Beethoven.

Manager Fryer's first week of Wagner Opera ("Fliegender Holländer," "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin") was so successful that he was induced to return to the Boston Theatre last week and give us a specimen of the Wagnerian "Music Drama" proper—the "latest form of infidelity" in Music. (Herr Tappert may put that in his Wagner Lexicon if he please.) This was the second of the four dramas which, with the prelude, "Rheingold," compose the Niebelung Trilogy that made all the world familiar with the name of Bayreuth. It was "Die Walküre," and it was presented twice (on Monday and Wednesday evenings),—also the first act alone on Friday night, when the greatest audience of the season were disappointed in the promise of *Fidelio*. The announcement of Beethoven's masterpiece did not improve the chances of the *Walküre*. Set down at first for Friday. It was found to be so much in the hearts and the desire of Boston music lovers, that many reserved themselves for that, comparatively indifferent to more of Wagner, and such was the demand for seats, that it was concluded to anticipate and give *Fidelio* also on Thursday to accommodate the "overflow." There was also a single performance (on Tuesday evening) of *Lohengrin*, decidedly the most popular, so far, of the Wagner works.

The *Walküre*, reported so successful in New York, attracted but small audiences here,—on the first night especially. And never have we sat in an intelligent assembly which appeared more puzzled, bored, and wearied out by the great length (four hours), as well as by the strangeness, heaviness and dullness alike of the dramatic characters and plot, the music, and much of the performance, in spite of much that was adequate and brilliant. Indeed the middle act cost such a depressing exercise of patience, that many could hold out no longer and went home, thereby losing what is undoubtedly the best part of the work, the scene between Wotan and Brünnhilde, where the god surrounds his favorite but disobedient Walküre daughter ("Wunschkinder," "Schilddmädchen," or what not) with fire; this, could one come in to it afresh, would probably reveal some noble recitative (not so utterly unlike that of older masters), and certainly declaimed with noble dignity and passion by Frau PAPPENHEIM, whose whole impersonation of Brünnhilde was of commanding power and beauty. Many also found delight in the moonlight love-song and dialogue between Siegmund and Sieglinde in the first act, which has something like a melody;—to our feeling it gives a suggestion of great beauty, but not quite the satisfactory assurance; the studied accompaniment, with its peculiar rhythm (triplets mutually adhesive, syncopated) was to us cloying and unclear and morbid; so that when its characteristic phrase or motive kept returning afterwards in one or another instrument, we grew sick of its sweetness.—But we anticipate.

The fact of a dull and disappointed audience as we have stated,—with the exception of a very few admirers (whose admiration possibly may be accounted for without accepting Wagner's theories or his transcendent genius as a musical creator), a few more who were curiously interested, and a few who stand systematically committed to the innovation on the score of "progress," bound to accept it now with reverence and trust and great joy in *future*. These last, very naturally, charge the failure mainly to shortcomings in the performance,—and partly to the ignorance or the insensibility of an unregenerate public. (It was not insensible to the beauty, the transcendent genius, the consummate Art, the profound humanity and pathos, the power which we all feel to be divine, in Beethoven's *Fidelio*!). Undoubtedly the performance was immeasurably below the Bayreuth standard. The outward accessories, the scenery and stage effects, on which so much of the charm depended there, were wanting here. Nor, with the single exception of Mme. PAPPENHEIM, had we any very superior singers or actors. The orchestra alone, under the sure and vigorous lead of Herr NEUKIRCH, was excellent; but not placed out of sight, down in that "mystical abyss" where the harsh, coarse noise of brass could be subdued and blended to the mysterious imaginative swell and die-away of the Bayreuthian Eolian harp.—As on their former visit, singers, orchestra and all are to be credited with earnest, conscientious effort, and with the "German heartiness" with which they threw themselves into an ungracious task beyond their means. Mme. Pappenheim, as singer and as actress, steadily grew in favor; she has the large expressive voice, the commanding presence, the effective musical declamation, and the endurance, for the exacting part of Brünnhilde; she could plead for Siegmund with a fervor and an eloquence that might have satisfied the poet-composer himself. Mme. CASSIA acts well, as of old, and sang all faithfully, distinctly, and with certainty, to say the least. Herr BASCHOFF, the tenor, sang the music of Siegmund—the one part blessed with any finite melody—with sentiment and pathos, but lacked ease and self-possession as an actor, and the imposing stature for the heroic Volgang, in both of which respects he might well have been replaced by Herr BLUM, the baritone, who looked and declaimed so grandly in the stern character of Hunding. Herr PREUSSER sang the part of Wotan quite effectively, while in figure and appearance there was little suggestive of the All Father except the traditional blinder over one eye. The eight Walkyrie maidens (of all ages), in their famous "Ride" and gathering after battle on the rocks, shouting and screaming their "ho-jo-to-hos," on intervals purposely discordant (of the major triad, with the octave, and sharp fifth!) made all we had ever known of discord musical and sweet by contrast, keeping up the shrill witches' sabbath for some ten minutes with an intensity, which seemed to indicate that the point was to reach the last extremity of remoteness from all human musical relatedness of tones, that thereby we might conceive what wild, wonderful, poetic creatures in the mind of Wagner these Walkyries were. Yes, "wild" is the word with the admirers; and surely we have no disposition to gainsay its fitness.

But after making all allowance for the imperfect reproduction on our stage, it is in Wagner's own production that we find the secret of its failure to interest our audience. It does not require a perfect performance to reveal the genius, the beauty of a great work of musical or musico-dramatic Art. *Fidelio* was but indifferently well—some would say very badly—performed, and yet the audience were delighted and inspired by it. It is easy to name several reasons, found in the work itself, to show why it never could interest an audience very deeply, except when given under very exceptional cir-



circumstances, as at Bayreuth, and why there, as here, it was precisely the most musical, the most appreciative, who were the least interested and the most offended.—And here, *en passant*, we may point out the fallacy of the cheap and common argument: "Oh, Beethoven was not appreciated in his own day." Beethoven was appreciated by the most appreciative, by those with poetry and music in their souls, and notably by other great musicians and men of the finest culture, with a few casual exceptions like Spohr; it took time of course for him to reach the masses. Moreover Beethoven was in no sense a revolutionist in Art; his genius had its own intense and glorious individuality; he was an originator, but an originator within the forms (essentially) and in the same direction, following out the same development with his long line of predecessors. He put forth no theories, nor even thought of any; he never hinted even, when he brought voices into the Ninth Symphony, that Music *as such* had uttered its last word.—that Music thenceforth required to be co-ordinated with, or subordinated to speech, poetry and other arts in order to be music worth the while much longer; he never quarrelled with the family relationship of keys, never renounced the æyren Melody, never tried to break the bonds of the law which maketh free; never spurned the pursuit of Beauty in itself as one thing indispensable to all Art; never,—he the most restless of men, and urged by aspirations uncontainable, violated that principle of *repose*, which critics celebrate in all the perfect models of all Arts, but toward which Wagner is the Macbeth that murders sleep. Beethoven was content to do as others do, but do it in his own way and do it better. Real creative genius does not need to quarrel with the past, to break the forms, to shift the arena, in order to show itself original.—

1. Now the first thing we have to name as shutting out the Wagner drama from our sympathies (and here we follow his own order, giving the word, the text, the poetry the precedence)—is the mythological character of his plot and subject. Why should the Scandinavian gods and monsters, giants and Walkyries, Wotan and Fricka, Thor and Loke, Siegmund and Sieglinde and their incestuous amours, interest us upon the stage? One can read the Nibelungenlied, that grand old "German Iliad," with interest; and had Wagner drawn his plot entirely from that,—which is in fact a Christian poem and never mentions one of the Norse gods,—he would have had a theme of human interest, and yet as legendary, as *echt-Deutsch*, heroic, national as he could wish. Instead of that, he draws chiefly from the strange old ballads of the Icelandic *Edda*, and peoples his stage with huge shadowy forms, only arriving at the properly human, after the awakening of Brunhilde, in the beginning of the last play, the "Twilight of the Gods," and mingling it with phantoms even there. How infinitely better, in a dramatic point of view, would have been such a truly poetic condensation of all the real human tragedy of the Nibelungenlied, as that noble play by Gellert, in which Mme. Janaschek has lately given us her magnificent impersonation of a Brunhild purely human!

2. The subordination of Music to Poetry. And very artificial poetry at that. Long-winded dialogue, full of conceits, alliterations, even puns, at all events a tedious play on words. Not without passages of true poetic beauty and dramatic strength; but for the most part affectations, and a laborious, anxious building onward of the lofty (?) rhyme, to endless length, that music, counter-tunnelling from the mountain's other side, may meet it; these two blind factors groping for each other! Now say what you will about not judging this as Music, but as a Music drama, the human fact is, and ever will be, that when people go for anything that is musical, as distinct from spoken drama, they look for music chiefly, and enjoy the work according as it satisfies the musical desire in man. But here Music is robbed of her own independent being, and made to do drudgery in the word-mills of theory. This is what, borrowing a famous title from an old theological controversy in these parts, we have called "the latest form of infidelity" in music.—If a man does not believe in music, *music pure*, can he expect to win in the long run by mere side uses of an art he deems so insufficient in itself. He may get up an interesting occasion, a success *sui generis* for the time being, as at Bayreuth; but what after all has Music as such gained by it, or what we as music-lovers, seeing that every time that we go back to older masters we find something so much better?

3. The long spun recitative, and for the singers nothing else—or what Wagner chooses to call his

"infinite" or "endless melody," or "melos,"—was fatal to the enjoyment of that audience. And "culture," musical knowledge, special study, did not help the matter. With few exceptions, the most bored were the most musical. For such chanting of long speeches, painfully fitting each word to its tone, committing neither thought nor character nor situation to any winning vital form of melody or music, but requiring for its understanding the fastening of the eye on the libretto and the stage,—save as you may have learned how to interpret certain interpretative hints from the "mythic" orchestra below,—all this we say is not only dry, devoid of charm, and insufferably tedious and *langweilig*; but in the nature of the case it all consumes time fearfully; for though the words are not repeated in the music, yet the words are very many, and it costs time for each wordy speaker to utter himself singly one after another. When Wotan and Fricka (Jupiter and Juno) hold their long diatonic on the free love question, or the two lovers their sentimental dialogue by moonlight, you cannot help thinking how much sooner they might get through, and how much more interesting to the hearer, if only both could be allowed to sing at once in a duet. We have always thought it one of the glories, one of the essential advantages of Opera over spoken drama, that in it two, three, six or more characters could sing together, in a concerted piece, each keeping its individuality distinct, each by the magic power of music made transparent to us, all revealed to us both in themselves, their present moods and feeling, and in their mutual relation. You have only to hear the quartet, the masked trio, or the sextet in *Don Juan* to become aware of that. There are brevity, charm, insight into character and feeling all secured at once by the old Art, with the genius to use it; and all these are sacrificed in this wilful, though gigantic, effort to substitute another Art on theory.

4. The paucity and poverty of musical ideas, too, must strike any one in an analysis of the score. Not every new and striking phrase or passage is a musical idea. A musical idea is a germ which demands development. But here we have always phrases, phrases,—which for the most part lead to nothing; promises that disappoint. In what is sung, the words dictate all. In the orchestra, where we are told to look chiefly for ideas, it is after all a string of glittering fragments.

5. And here a new trouble, dazzling it may be, but confusing. Those everlasting "leading motives" (*Leitmotive*), of which so much is said; the unexpected, musically irrelevant, little phrases heard in the instruments at each allusion to a character or incident in the drama. Most hearers of course heard them unexpectingly. We happened to know enough of the preceding play, the "Rheingold," to recognize the Wotan or Walhalla motive, the Sword motive, etc., etc. They cross and interrupt the natural flow of the music almost every instant; listening *musically*, you cannot feel that they have any right there; for they do not develop, they are only skillfully forced in. Instead of musical ideas, they are simply labels, tags and badges. Exasperating bores, the pack of them!

6. We but allude again to the want of *repose*, resulting from the restless, formless continuity with which the listening sense is dragged on by sheer tyranny of verba test.

7. And now for the orchestral effects. Strange, wild, brilliant, fascinating very often; sometimes tenderly poetic; but how often hard, discordant, crushing, colorless and empty, ugly! The Wagner orchestra is room and space-filling to be sure; it is remarkably voluminous and rich and overpowering; its sound is never lost. Much of the older and better music may sound thin compared with it. It has some very grandiose and swelling pieces in the *Lohengrin*; but those have not yet parted with all form. His orchestra tells for all that there is in it; but in *idea*, in *real contents*, in genial inspiration, how often it is poor and empty!

8. Cacophony in general. A lack of real beauty. We have the beauty only, as we said before, of phrases, passages, effects of color, contrast and of climax. It seems to us a *bric-a-brac* kind of beauty; such beauty as a child finds in a rare and costly heterogeneous collection of bright things,—the whole together less important than a single masterpiece of painting. We have suspected that it is in this way that this instrumentation so arrests and charms the ear and fancy of those who do not listen deeply, do not seek for musical ideas and their development. After long stretches of dull, murky, empty, ugly groping in the depths of tone, or of stunning loudness, the momentary flowing together of soft reeds and flutes and horns in a pretty phrase of a few bars, repeated in sequences, of course sounds delightfully. It reminds us of the church chanting all in unison, and very dull, until the final cadence in full harmony; and you exclaim: How wonderful these closing chords! what chords can they be?—only to find that they are just the dominant and tonic chords of the most commonplace of cadences; the long monotony before has made them magical!

9. Finally, what can be the intrinsic genius or worth of the Opera or Drama either, which depends upon an immense scenic outlay for its effect? Hanslick says: "Where all the emphasis is laid upon hitherto unheard of

externalities, one can scarcely rid himself of some misgiving about the strength and soundness of the artistic heart and kernel of the matter." Goethe was disturbed when he saw a gifted playwright "waiting for a theatre to come." He wrote: "At any village fair, on planks laid over barrels, I will trust myself to give delight to the whole mass of cultivated and uncultivated people with the plays of Calderon."—Is not *Fidelio* a case in point? The scene a prison court, a prison cell, and then before the gate. But there is music, there is genius, inspiration in its every note; and even in a very coarse performance you cannot help feeling it. So it was here last week. Mr. Fries did a service to the good old cause in bringing us the "Walküre" followed by "Fidelio." The Art of Music, after all, is safe!

Now if we have given all our space to but one topic, to the omission of concerts, correspondence and announcements, set it down to Richard, the Great Claimant, whose claims do so preoccupy the world.

(Crowded out last time.)

A charming matinee was that of Miss BILLINGS,—an accomplished pupil of Mme. Schiller—in Union Hall on Friday, April 8. Both in programme and performance it was choice and artistic:

Trio, op. 12.....	Hummel
Miss Billings, Miss Shattuck, Mr. Wolf Fries.	
Song—"Par dilecti".....	Lotti
Miss Clara Doria.	
Piano-Forte Solo, Ballade, op. 20.....	Reinecke
Miss Billings.	
Song—"Gute Nacht".....	Schubert
Miss Clara Doria.	
Romance, op. 50, No. 2.....	Beethoven
Mr. Wolf Fries.	
Piano-forte Solos, { a. Warum..... } Schubert	
{ b. Grollen..... }	
{ c. Intermezzo, Scherzo, op. 24.	
Hans von Bülow	
Miss Billings.	
Songs, { a. Lied des Wandernden Musikanten, }	
{ b. Ständchen, (serenade) }	F. Hiller
Miss Clara Doria.	
Tarantelle.....	Whitney
Miss Billings.	

The Trio by Hummel, a genial and charming work in itself, was capitally well played. Miss BILLINGS has a fine, crisp, clear touch, and very smooth and fluent execution. The young girl who played the violin part (Miss SHATTUCK) did it admirably,—rich and sympathetic tone, good phrasing, and a firm, clear, expressive style. Mr. WOLF FRIES could not complain of his associates. Miss Billings distinguished herself by very brilliant playing in the *Ballade* by Reinecke, the piece by Bülow, and the *Tarantelle*. Miss DORIA was in her sweetest voice, and we need not say that all her songs were admirable, while the selections had the charm of novelty to nearly all the audience. Mr. OTTO DRESEL played her accompaniments.

NEW YORK, APRIL 23. The sixth and last Symphony concert of the season took place at Steinway Hall on Saturday evening, April 7, when Mr. Thomas presented:

Symphony, No. 2, in D.....	Beethoven
Largo, (adapted by J. Holmesberger).....	Handel
For Violin, Viola, Harp Organ, and Solo	
Violin by Mr. E. E. Jacobsohn.	
Elne Faust Symphonie.....	Liszt

The season has been a brilliant and a prosperous one. Nearly every available place was taken, while the audience represented the highest intelligence and culture of our city.

The second symphony of Beethoven is ever welcome, and its interpretation was another addition to the long and glorious list of orchestral triumphs, which has been increased during the season by equally fine performances of three other symphonies of Beethoven, namely, the fourth, sixth and eighth.

The *Largo* from Handel is a theme of marked simplicity, but a fine effect is attained by the treatment, which gives the motif to a solo violin, accompanied by a harp, and afterwards masses all the violins, violas, cellos and full organ upon the same theme. The violin solo was artistically performed by Mr. Jacobsohn, and Mr. Thomas repeated the second part of the work in response to an enthusiastic encore.

The *Faust* Symphony of Liszt was accompanied by the usual printed analysis, and the work certainly needs explanation. It is only after repeated hearing that we are able to discern any meaning in that which at first appears to be "a perfect mass without a plan." The symphony contains three distinct movements: 1. "Faust" (Allegro); 2. "Gretchen" (Andante); 3. "Mephistopheles" (Scherzo and Finale). Liszt has composed two endings to this symphony: one, which is usually employed, for orchestra alone, and one for Tenor solo and chorus. At the rehearsal on Thursday preceding the concert the orchestral ending was given, and at the concert the symphony was performed with the second ending or "Chorus Mysticus," which was sung by the New York Liederkreis society with solo by Mr. H. A. Bischoff, who sang with excellent effect. The orchestral rendering was superb. In the presence of such clear interpretation and brilliant execution it was easy to forget the immense difficulty of the music.

At the close of the tenth season of Symphony Concerts the question arises:—What will New York do for the man who has worked so long and so successfully in the cause of musical culture and who, by his own persistent and almost unaided effort has made this city one of the

musical capitals of the world? Six concerts in a year will not maintain an orchestra, nor does it pay to travel from place to place with such a number of performers in this country of magnificent distances. In a word, if this orchestra is to be preserved, it must have an abiding place. An effort is now to be made to supply this need, and it is best explained by the following circular "To the Public:"

Negotiations are pending, by an organization to be known as "The Thomas Garden Concert Company," for securing a proper site, and erecting buildings thereon, suitable for a Hall with Gardens, in which Mr. Thomas and his orchestra may be permanently lodged.

Many of those who have regularly attended the Symphony Concerts have expressed the desire to permanently and securely locate Mr. Thomas and his orchestra in New York. It is believed that they will be desirous of evincing that interest in the most substantial manner—by subscribing in aid of the project—as soon as the undertaking has sufficiently progressed to justify the submission to them.

Among those present at this concert there are doubtless many who will be glad to be made acquainted with the plans under consideration as soon as they shall be definitely determined upon. If they will forward their addresses to the promoters, a full prospectus, with details of the enterprise, will be sent them as soon as they are prepared, which, it is expected, will be in a short time.

It is hoped that the responses will be numerous enough to indicate a willingness, on the part of the public, to at least become informed of the opportunity that will be afforded them of recognizing Mr. Thomas' labors and of establishing him, upon an assured, permanent basis, in this city, where so much of his life has been spent, and so much of his work has been done.

New York, April 14th, 1877.

(For full particulars address, The Thomas Garden Concert Co., Care of Messrs. Steinway and Sons, New York.)

A. A. C.

[Conclusion next time.]

### The Telephone Revolution in Music.

[From the Cincinnati Gazette.]

The prediction made by that eminent manager of exotic Italian opera, Mr. Max Strakosch, that by means of the telephone houses will be supplied with music as they are now with gas and water, opens up a great vista of improvement in domestic comfort and alike of musical abundance and economy. If from a central source wires can be laid to carry the music to each house, so that it can be turned on at will, as we turn on gas and water, or as we open a register of a hot-air pipe to heat an apartment, it is obvious that the superiority, cheapness and convenience of this supply will cause families to abandon the making of their own music, just as gas has extinguished tallow dips and oil lamps, and as public water works have done away with wells and rain cisterns.

The relief that this will give to society from pianos alone is so vast a subject that the mind staggers at the conception. What is home without a piano! Taking the population of the United States as 40,000,000, and estimating but one piano to forty persons, makes a million pianos, whose thrumming roll is as continuous as England's morning drum beat, and the sound of whose torment—to use a Scripture figure—goeth up forever and ever. There are people who have indulged a strange fancy in the idea of lifting the cover off that place which for euphony we call the bottomless pit, and of hearing the sounds which would issue. Equally dreadful is the figure of going above and lifting off the cover and letting out the sound of the torment of a million pianos, played upon by the average American girl. But such fancies are too fearful for safe indulgence. No one is justified in trying dangerous experiments upon his reason.

At the low estimate of one girl at a time to a piano, there are a million American girls undergoing lessons and practice on the piano. Of course neither the numbers nor the girls are round, but we choose round numbers for convenience of figuring. To become a fine executioner, a girl must begin at not more than six years old, and keep on always; but although they all begin vigorously, they drop out after a while, like the pupils in our public schools, of whom only about one and a half per cent. pass through the high school. The rest are scattered all along the wayside, in all the years of the school course. We shall, therefore, estimate the average years of practice at only four. When we try to think of a million of girls in perpetual succession, practicing four years, at say two hours a day, on a million pianos, the results become too fearful for the human mind to conceive.

Of this million of American girls, subjected to this practice, and subjecting their families and friends to it, not more than one in a hundred ever gets to such a proficiency as to play to the edification of any but a very infatuated mother, who knows the whole of the painful process by which her little stock of tunes has been learned, and who thinks that they may be less worn to

others. Probably not one in a hundred ever gets so far as to play that show piece, "The Battle of Prague," which has been the masterpiece of so many generations of girls. When we think of all the cost and waste of this, and, what is immeasurably more, of all the suffering it imposes on the girls, and, what is infinitely more, of all the suffering it inflicts on the American household and on visitors, we can see that the sum is too vast for utterance.

The history of the American girl's efforts to become a singer is even more melancholy, and the fruit still rarer. And, whether vocal or instrumental, this labored accomplishment is apt to be dropped when the young woman marries, or as soon as marriage has introduced another kind of music into the family, which, by a queerly mixed poetical metaphor, is called a well-spring of noise. With telephone wires laid to each house, connecting with a central factory where the instrumental and vocal music shall be made by wholesale, from which each household can turn on at will by simply opening a valve or connecting wire, the supply of music from the general source will be so superior to any that private individual effort, even though proficient, can furnish, that the domestic piano and household voice would be as shamed as the tallow candle by gaslight, or the old flint and steel by the lucifer match.

Of course this will raise the alarming question, What will become of piano makers and sellers, teachers, tuners, music sellers, etc.? A similar question has met every labor-saving invention; but experience has shown that the invention itself increased the demand for labor. This invention will create a large demand for musicians in the factory, and a large industry in the making and laying of telephone pipe, wires, meters, and so on. We mention meters, because it is obvious that no family will want music turned on all the while, and that there will be great variations in the demands of different families, and there must be means by which each shall be charged for only as much music as it consumes. This promises a multiplication of that blessing which every household has found in the gas meter. And there is no reason why a meter should not register as satisfactorily the amount of music delivered.

Every great step in the march of progress arouses fear in timid conservatism. The then inhabitants did not want chaos disturbed by creation just as the inhabitants of the present want creation, to go no further. Objections will be raised, but they are easily answered. Although the telephone will naturally be an elevator of musical taste, yet it is not proposed to make it a promiscuous can-bud—a new figure, caveat filed—to require all tastes to be stretched up to the most classical—whatever that may be—compositions. Different factories and different sets of telephonic wires will be required to suit the variety of tastes. Each house can be supplied with all kinds, or can have that one which suits its taste. Thus the greatest establishment will be for the distribution of the popular American music, negro minstrelsy, while the small class of the cultured can take their choice all the way from the jiggling Sebastian Bach to the intellectual Beethoven.

The objection will be raised that this distribution of music to our dwellings will disconnect it from the balmy and balsamy air of the concert hall, which has become so associated in our minds with musical performances that music must seem strange without it; also that in our own dwellings we shall not have the charming accompaniment of the voice of the young man behind us, who has brought his girl for a rare treat, and who thinks he must make it interesting for her by keeping up the conversation; nor of the two women who discuss the dresses of the singers; nor of the musical enthusiast who shows his fine musical sensibility by beating time with his foot against our chair, in all the strongly measured passages; nor of the two gentlemen connoisseurs of German extraction who as the piece goes along discuss it in the soft German tongue; nor of the group of American society young people who keep up their chatting and giggling as unconscious of any musical sensations as so many puppies; nor of the American man beside us who spits a point of tobacco juice on our side of the premises; nor of the son of Israel who feeds his girl with strong peppermint candy, diffusing the odor all around; nor of many other concert and theatre luxuries which are so associated with these performances that to separate music from them seems a hazardous experiment.

Association of ideas is a mental force which cannot be disregarded; but it is likely that substitutes, available in private houses, will be found for these and the other incidents of the concert room. By means of our heating furnaces our rooms can be overheated, and it is likely that chemical science can furnish odorizers which shall resemble the concert air. Manners will show out under all circumstances, and, under the influence of our free and equal principles, even a small circle will contain the usual features. That social reputation for musical culture which is gained so painfully by many, by attending high art performances, can be more easily gained by the wealthy, by supplying their dwellings with the telephone. This will establish their musical taste as effectively as the purchase of a well bound library does their literary culture. The telephone in churches will enable them to abolish choirs, which are apt to be irreverent and disorderly bodies, and whose presence, facing the congregation, as is usual in our Protestant churches, is distracting to worship.

This is on the supposition that churches will still be confined; but it may be that the speaking telephone will bring the preaching, musical and other service of worship from a central factory, so that each family can enjoy it on its own premises in such postures of luxury and ease as it may have facilities for. As has been said of blue glass, the wonders of the telephone have only just begun to expand.

## Special Notices.

### DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE LATEST MUSIC.

Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

The Old Church Door. Solo or Qt. G. 3.  
d to E. Richter. 30

"Where Ivy clings to the mould'ring stone  
And the huge bell hangs in the tower alone."

An impressive ballad, in good style, fitted for either one or for four voices, as you please to use it.

When the World all is young. C. 3. g to D.  
Waldeck. 35

"And ev'ry goose a swan, lad,  
And ev'ry lass a queen."

It is Charles Kingsley's vigorous poetry, and it is a good, hearty, rousing song.

Do not slam the Gate. Solo and Chorus.  
Bb. 2. d to C. Shelley. 30

"Beesie listens ev'ry night,  
And so does tramping Kate."

Yes, one should be careful. Neat song.

Duetts, Baritone and Bass, by Franz Abt. ea. 40  
No. 2. Brother Heart, be not cast  
down. F. 4. C to f. Bass staff.

"Give to us thy hand,  
Jolly every one."

A duet for "good fellows" to sing when they are having a merry musical time.

A Dream. (Spinning Song). A. 4. E to a.  
Vincent. 40

"I took the threads of my spinning,  
All of blue summer air."

A sweet poem by Adelaide Proctor, fitted to a clear, bright melody, and quite a varied accompaniment.

Instrumental.

Ballade. (From Flying Dutchman). Bb. 4.  
Spindler. 50

Rather differing from most of Spindler's refined and delicate pieces. This is graceful, while it has a character of wildness.

Les Bergers Wattenau. Air de Danse. Style  
of Louis XV. A. 3. Gregh. 40

Being an old air, it has a character of quaintness which is nothing against. "Quaintly beautiful" is perhaps its best description.

Paquita Waltzes. 3. Raboch. 40  
A very pretty and varied set.

Concert Fantasia for the Organ. In the  
Free Style for Organ Exhibitions. C. 5.  
W. H. Clarke. 80

It is well known to many. Mr. Clarke has an almost unequalled talent for "howling off" an organ, and for making it what it is almost impossible to make it, a bright, entertaining concert instrument. Here is one of his compositions carefully marked for changes of stops, &c. Pedal part is easy, and the whole very entertaining.

March from 'Petite Mariée.' G. 3. Knight. 30  
Mr. K. has chosen a bright little air, which loses nothing by his arrangement.

Commander Cazeneuve's Favorite Polka.  
With Portrait. D. 4. Dulker. 40

It is hoped that this spirited composition will go like "magic," and so endorse the illustrious "Commandeur's" favor.

Lula Galop. F. 2. Newton. 30  
Lula cannot complain, this is a bright dance named for her.

### BOOKS.

THE SCHOOL SONG BOOK. By C. Everest.  
Price, 60 cts., or \$6.00 per dozen.

This is a fine collection of two and three-part songs of high character, with abundant explanations, exercises, &c. It is designed for Normal Schools and for Seminaries. The composer is Professor in a large Normal School.

ABBREVIATIONS.—Degrees of difficulty are marked from 1 to 7. The key is denoted by a capital letter, as C, Bb, etc. A large Roman letter marks the lowest and the highest note if on the staff, small Roman letters if below or above the staff. Thus: "C. 5. c to E," means "Key of C, Fifth degree, lowest letter c on the added line below, highest letter, E on the 5th space."



